

No. 34. C. W. #9
No. 78 M. 8th 52

Dated March 14th 1826

a
Dissertation
on
Maria a Peter,
by
John H. Griffins,
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This disease of which I purpose treating in
the following page (in compliance with an injunction
of the institution) seems not to have elicited that
degree of attention we might have expected from its
frequency of occurrence, and distressing nature; what
may be said of it by the more ancient authors I
know not, as I candidly acknowledge I am but little
acquainted with their writings, but neither Cullen
nor Thomas mentions it; among the authorities on the
subject with which I am acquainted, I will only men-
tion Wood and Armstrong of England, the late lamented
Rush, and Professor Chapman of our own Country;
without however particularly considering the views
which these gentlemen have taken of the disease, I
shall proceed to give those which seem to me correct,
without mentioning, and indeed, in many instan-
ces, without knowing, whence they were derived.
This variety of mania is one of the many, and

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not the least ^{of the} distressing consequences, produced by the immoderate use of spirituous liquors; unfortunately, it is too frequent among all classes of society, though it is said to be most commonly met with among those who have once enjoyed the comforts and luxuries of life, but having been reduced to indigence or want, by imprudence, or the frowns of fortune, seek relief from these cares, by resorting to this most destructive antidote. The operation of Alcohol in producing this disease, is little, and perhaps not at all, understood; it would seem, however, to operate particularly on the Nervous system, producing an indirect debility; that such is the effect of all articles of the class, I believe no one denies; thrown into the stomach, its primary operation is to increase the energies of the nervous system, and through it, every organ of the body; this is manifested by the increased secretion which takes place from the different glands, and the invigorated manner in which

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every organ performs its functions; the Stomach performs its office with unusual alacrity, the other Chyleoctic viscera seem equally excited, the mind is exhilarated, and the whole system exhibite the appearance of more than ordinarily good health; the patient now begins to imagine he has found the much wished for remedy, that will sooth his mental suffering while it contributes to his corporal health; but this delusive hope is of short duration, and after a greater or less time, agreeably to the proportion and frequency with which he has taken his remedy, he begins to find his system as much enervated, as it was before exhilarated, for after repeated exhibition, the vital energies of the system become fatigued, or exhausted, by the continued stimulus, are rendered insensible to its operation, and as a consequence.

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At about 10 AM we were
driven along a narrow path
in which all was covered by dense
scrub and low bushes all about.
I kept my horse at a walk and enjoyed
the view down the valley and then the tall pines
which covered the hill side. At about 11 AM we
arrived back to our camp ground and I
got out my telescope and looked up
the valley. The ground was rocky and
so it could not grow out much and
was to be seen between trees as patches
of scrub with rocks. There
were all of course little streams
and great patches of brush and
timber. Nowhere any settlements or
signs of man at home, although there

Mania is induced, or in other words, Mania seems to result from the inability of the system to receive that stimulus which habit has rendered necessary to the performance of its functions, or from the accustomed stimulus being too suddenly withdrawn.

It is now we begin to observe the approach of the disease. The patient complains in the commencement of a sense of lassitude, distinct chills, uneasiness in the head, loathing of food, and oppression about the praecordia; These symptoms are followed by a red but cool skin, which is, most commonly, covered with perspiration, white and moist tongue, pulse full and strong, but easily compressible, the stomach sometimes exceedingly irritable, the bowels obstinately constipated, face timid and suffused, sometimes tremours of the hands, and indeed of the whole

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body, wild eye, the countenance altogether pale,
and the mind now begins to shew
marks of participation in the general disorder.

It is in this form that simple Mania a potu, most
commonly, makes its appearance, but it is sometimes
accompanied by inflammation of the brain or
its meninges, and then assumes a somewhat differ-
ent aspect, requiring, as we shall presently see,
a very different mode of treatment; in this case,
the pulse instead of being soft and easily compres-
ible, becomes tense, the eye injected, the tongue
parched, great thirst, with a dry and hot skin.

In either case if the proper remedies be not timely-
resorted to, the disease advances, and we have in-
furiated Madness, the patient imagines himself
disturbed by the visits of some one, most common-
ly a near relative from whom he apprehends
much personal injury, and we hear him begging
for mercy, or imploring the assistance of others.

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In short, a thousand false impressions, or conceptions, are presented to the imagination of the patient, under the influence of which he acts, and we see him pecking at moths that seem floating in the air, or watching, with great circumspection, the motions of some hideous monster that seems approaching to devour him, and he attempts to escape, by striving to leap out at the window, concealing himself under the bed, or attempting his defence by seizing, - any weapon which may be at hand, indeed the variety of delusive impressions which are presented to the imagination of the patient ~~is~~ are innumerable, but there is one which, from the frequency of its occurrence, I should perhaps mention, it is that of a web which seems floating before him, and at which he is continually grasping; he also, not unfrequently, imagines the walls of his apartment are tottering, or about to fall and crush him.

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and we find him assiduously engaged in supporting them.

These fantastic illusions seem to be the result of the very great debility I have mentioned, induced on the nervous system by the previous action of the liquor, in consequence of which, the nerves of sense, or those which receive impressions from without, acting independently of the will, (the brain being unable to exert its ordinary influence over them,) transmit to the sensuum commune impressions which, in a state of health, would require for their production, the intervention of some material agent.

Nor do the nerves of sense alone suffer, nearly, or quite all of those belonging to the viscera of the Abdomen and Thorax are likewise affected, this is at first manifested by a derangement of functions which ^{take} place in

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these organs; the lungs seem incapable of purifying these offices properly, as the blood is imperfectly decarbonized in its passage through them; this is manifested by the livid appearance, the skin, lips, tongue &c, the whole of the alimentary canal, as before remarked, becomes torpid, the liver is unable to perform its functions properly, and we have either a total suppuration of bile, or, as is most commonly the case, the secretion becomes exceedingly retarded, the capillary vessels of the surface are much affected, and a feverish, or torpid, state of action, is manifest in the general circulation.

On examination after death, it is said, the following appearances present themselves. The stomach, and other portions of the alimentary canal, are much inflamed, the liver is variously diseased, with ulcer, tubercle, scrophulus, or chronic inflammation. The contents of the thorax seem to suffer but little, though ap-

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Appearances of congestion are occasionally exhibited, and an effusion of water is sometimes found within the cavity, or that of the Pericardium.

The brain is inflamed, and the vessels belonging to its membranes much injected, with an extravasation of blood, or effusion of water, within the Cranium.

These appearances are in entire accordance with the views I have taken of the disease, i., perhaps, we except the inflamed appearance of the brain, and even this, is not altogether incompatible with the pathology I have delivred, as we can readily conceive the capillary vessels might take on the inflammatory action in consequence of the difficulty the blood meets with in its passage from the arteries to the veins, these vessels being much injected. Though inflammation of the meninges of the brain does, undoubtedly, sometimes occur, yet I think it is

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but seldom, and am disposed to believe that
the injection of their vessels, which has resulted
wholly from the languid circulation consequent
to a deficiency of nervous excitement, was mistaken
for inflammation. The inflammation which takes
place in the alimentary canal, I believe, occurs
only in the latter stage of the disease, and may
be referred to the depraved and acrid secretions
which are poured in lost from the glands whose
ducts terminate within its cavity, or to the con-
gestion which takes place in the vena portarum.
in consequence of the difficulty the blood meets
with in its passage through the liver, (the secre-
tion of bile being for the most part greatly
diminished) giving rise to an effort of the
capillary vessels of the mucous surface to
relieve themselves of the excessive accumulation
of blood which necessarily takes place in
them, which effort produces inflammation.

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I am led to this conclusion from the circumstance
that an inflammation of the alimentary canal when
moderate, there is, most commonly, an increased ex-
cretion of excess fluid from the capillary vessels
of the mucous coat, producing purulent mucusy
stools, and when more violent, we have those
symptoms which denote its degree, from those
of Dysentery, to those of Colitis, now as nei-
ther of these conditions is observable in the
commencement of the disease, I think the
conclusion I have drawn fully warranted. It
is in one of these ways I would explain the pro-
duction of Diarrhaea, a symptom somuch, and
justly, dreaded in the disease.

Until lately, so little was this disease un-
derstood, that the treatment of it may be said
to have been entirely empirical. Not many
years since the practice of trusting the cure
almost exclusively to emetics, was introduced

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by Dr. Klapp, a distinguished Physician of this City, and such, I am told by the Physicane of the Ulme House, was his confidence in the remedy, that he administered it, without discrimination, in almost every stage of the malady, but, as his patients were frequently known to expire while under its operation, experience soon corrected the fatal error, and the remedy was abandoned by a majority of the Faculty as, at least, always hazardous, if not distinctly injurious; others, however, believing it useful under certain restrictions, retained it in practice, and among these I may mention Professor Chapman, who, however, tells us it should be used with much caution, and thinkes it only serviceable in awaking the susceptibility of the system to the operation of other remedies; yet there are not wanting those who make a more extensive application of the remedy, and contend that its operation is not only safe, but highly efficacious;

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but as I shall have occasion hereafter to point out, more particularly, its application to this disease, it is unnecessary that I should say more of it at present.

During the last spring, the disease having prevailed to a great extent, the cells of the Alms House were crowded with persons labouring under it, in consequence of which, I had an opportunity of witnessing a great number of cases, and observing the efficacy of the practice instituted in them, which, if not dictated by the same pathological views I have delivered of the disease, was exactly such as those views would lead us to adopt. without, however, either noticing the practice generally recommended by practitioners, than to say it consists chiefly in the administration of stimulants, I shall proceed to detail as fully as possible, the practice which, from its success

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in numerous instances, and the pathological view
I entertain of the disease, I should be disposed
to pursue.

From the pathology I have delivered, the
indications of cure become evident, they are to
support the exhausted energies of the system,
while we endeavour to quiet mental excitement,
and remove the functional disturbance of the
viscera, which, if left to itself, would be apt to
terminate in organic derangement, and even or-
ganic derangement, I believe, all parties admit
we have very little control.

Though these indications are to be kept con-
stantly in view, yet it must not be inferred that
we are necessarily to begin our treatment with
the exhibition of stimulants, on the contrary,
I think they will seldom be required in the
commencement, and should, if possible, be a-
voided, as they only tend to perpetuate the

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in, which it is our object to remedy; it is true
temporary relief may sometimes be obtained
by their administration, but on withholding the
stimulants a relapse ensues. In the commence-
ment of an attack, our attention should be more
particularly directed to the two latter inde-
cations; namely, the allaying of mortal excre-
ment, and the restoration of the recreations;
the indications are best fulfilled by adminis-
tering, in the first place, an emetic; this should
be in a full dose, and judiciously selected, the
sulphate of Zinc, or Specumunha, ought to be
preferred to Tart. Ant, as the latter is apt to
induce diarrhea, a symptom, nearly, always fatal
in the disease. Of all other remedies, Specac-
untha seems most suited to the case,
though it is surprising to what an extent
it may, sometimes, be exhibited without
producing any effect. I have known 3

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given, which not producing vomiting, the same
quantity, with the addition of 10 grs of Tartar Emet-
ic, was repeated with no better success. These cases,
however, are of rare occurrence, and a much
more moderate dose will generally be found to
answer the purpose; the emetic clears the stom-
ach of any crudities that may exist there, aw-
akens susceptibility, produces a strong revolu-
tionary impression on the system generally, and
prepares the way for other remedies; previous
to the exhibition of the emetic, cups should
be applied to the head, and if those symptoms
exist which I have mentioned as indicating in-

flammation of the brain, in addition to this, gen-
eral bleeding will become necessary, after which,
the head should be shaved, and a blister so ap-
plied as to cover the whole of it; this is a remedy
much relied on by Dr. Parish of this City, and one
which he thinks superior to every thing else in

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quieting mental excitement, and procuring sleep.
In this opinion, the respectable authority just
quoted, is supported by the testimony of many
of our most able practitioners, among whom, I
may mention Dr. J. J. Cooper the physician and the phy-
sicians of the Army House, whose experience is
ample. But here we have to lament the con-
trary opinion of one, who is justly ranked among
the highest authorities of Europe, Dr. Armstrong,
who contends that they are not only useless, but
highly mischievous, in every stage and modifica-
tion of the disease; he asserts that they "increase
nervous irritation and fever, make the patient
more restless and watchful, and thus exhaust
his strength. Nothing has more retarded the
progress of medical science than the contradictory
opinions advanced by men of equal weight of
authority, who, in spite of their high attain-
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themselves of those prejudices in favour of a
mucous Theory, which so far prevents the un-
derstanding as to induce them, from the same
concurrence of circumstances, to arrive at con-
clusions directly opposite. These remarks may not
be strictly applicable here, yet we are too often
forced to resort to some such expedient in order
to reconcile the difference of opinion among
those who profess to give us the result of their
experience only. From what I have seen, I
would not advise the application of blisters
until proper evacuations had been resorted to,
but these being premised, I have seen them
frequently used, and as I think, with very great
advantage.

After the operation of the emetic, the pa-
tient should be purged with senna tea, or
some other mild cathartic, after which, we
must proceed to administer calomel and opium.

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with the double object of restoring the secretion, and composing the sleep; it is of the almost consequence that sleep be procured, as a cure is never effected until it is induced, nor is it of less importance that the secretions be restored; to accomplish these objects we may commence by administering 1ʒ of Calomel with the same quantity of Opium every hour or two, increasing, or diminishing, the dose, to suit the circumstances of the case; if the skin be dry and hot, the addition of Specacuanha will be found of much service in restoring the delusion to the surface. In this way we direct the cure, occasionally interposing a mild cathartic to carry off the depraved secretions, until a remission of the disease takes place, or the mouth becomes affected by the mercury; should this latter condition obtain

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before the disease is arrested, we must omit
the calomel, and direct a fragated mixture
of camphrum with spirits of Turpentine, or musk
julap, each of which will, occasionally, be
found of much benefit, in the mean time,
the system, should it become so much prostra-
ted as to require it, must be supported by the lib-
eral administration of wine rectified, volatile
julap, Brandy punch &c. as an auxiliary meas-
ure, the room must be kept dark, free from
noise, and every measure calculated to con-
tribute to the quietude of the patient should
be strictly attended to.

After the administration of Calomel and
Opium for a few days we, most commonly, have
the satisfaction to witness the approaching
convalescence of our patients, the Tongue be-
comes clean, the skin covered with a healthy
respiration, the constipation of the bowels

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disappear, and the patient now begins to recover rationally; but this is not always the happy issue of the disease, for, after continuing some time, it is apt to assume the typhoid character, which is marked by a dry and incrustated tongue, wild eye, contracted pupil, low-muttering delirium &c; it is now that stimulants are more imperiously demanded, and those of the most active kind should be liberally administered, such as Volatile alkali, camphor, musk juice, strong Brandy toddy, Tincture of Sophae, while at the same time we continue the use of Calomel Specacuantha and Opium.

There is one other remedy which has been much extolled by several European writers, and particularly by Dr Armstrong in his valuable work on Typhus Fever; I allude to the cold bath; Dr Armstrong only used it

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in the commencement of the disease, on patients who seemed to have much constitutional vigour, giving before, and after it, some warm stimulating liquor, and causing the skin to be well dried and rubbed with warm flannel; "by way of supporting the vessels, and ensuring sufficient reaction". Administered in this way, and under these circumstances, he thinks it may be resorted to, with safety, without regard to the condition of the surface, as the patients on whom he used it had a cool skin, and were covered with perspiration, yet it was found to quiet mental excitement, and procure sleep, after which, nothing more was necessary to complete the cure than an occasional opiate and aperient. In all cases of a suspicious nature, Dr Armstrong prefers the tepid affusion, though he found that the same beneficial results were not derived

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from its use, as he was compelled to administer purgatives and opium, or opium and calomel, to insure recovery.

Of the topical effusion I can say nothing myself, having never seen it employed, but in the commencement of the disease, I have known an emetic and the cold bath entirely remove it.

In the treatment of this complaint, as in every other, much will depend on a well regulated diet; it should consist of those articles which are most nutritious, while at the same time they are easily digestible, such as eggs, arrowroot &c, to which, if necessary, wine, or even brandy, may be added. When the patient becomes convalescent, the use of malt liquor and a nutritious diet is, in most cases, all that will be required, but we must still watch with

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care the condition of the patient, as he is often disturbed with morbid vigilance, and other unpleasant symptoms; these, should they occur, must be relieved by the administration of cordials, such as have been repeatedly enumerated in the course of this treatise, and need not be again repeated, in addition to which, however, I will mention that Hoffmann's anodyne drops are, occasionally, found of much service in relieving the irritability of the nervous system.

What shall I say of the Diarrhoea which sometimes occurs in the advanced stage of the disease? acting under the conviction that it is produced in the manner I have supposed, I think we can do nothing better than continue the practice which has been recommended in the disease throughout, and, indeed, if my views be correct, the

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course advised is eminently calculated to prevent its occurrence; nor did it take place in a single instance at the Alms House during the last spring and summer, where this practice was pursued; but that it does occasionally occur, let the practice instituted be what it may, there can be no doubt, and this too, at a stage of the disease when the proper remedies to relieve the inflammatory action of the intestines cannot be resorted to, the system being already completely prostrated, and, in spite of all our exertions, the patient sinks to the Tomb, the victim of his own insatiable appetite. Might not cold water thrown up the rectum, prove useful at this crisis?

I have now detailed the practice pursued in the Alms House in a disease which, until lately, was more dreaded than any other,

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of an acute form, with which they were forced to contend, but, under the treatment I have recommended, it has become comparatively manageable. From the first of May till the twenty-second of August, sixty cases were admitted into this institution, more than two thirds of which were treated with Calomel and Opium, and among these there were seventeen deaths, of the remaining third, who ~~were~~ were treated more on the stimulating plan, with Aromatic Mixture, Thelac Tincture, combined with oil of Turpentine, Porter &c., ten died. From this comparison it will be seen that the alternative course proved much the most successful; indeed, when we recollect that many of the cases were complicated with other diseases, and others brought to the house in articulo mortis, it proved more successful than could have been expected.

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Before closing this treatise, it may not be improper to mention a circumstance which, sometimes, occurs in the last or closing stage of the disease; I allude to the recovery of the mental faculties, when, not unfrequently, a scene of indescribable distress is exhibited, the patient becoming, too late, convinced of the improper course he has pursued through life, and the inevitable destiny which now awaits him. It would seem that in this case, the equilibrium of excitement is so far established between the different systems of the body, as to relieve the inordinate or morbid action of the brain, and permit the unfortunate sufferer, to close a life of misery and wretchedness, in a condition, at least, to hope for a happier hereafter.

for your friends & all friends and
acquaintances in general. I hope you will
not think all we have mentioned would
be suitable for such an age of peace,
as we have now. We have not
the same enemies to contend with, nor
have we the same trials to meet, nor
the same difficulties to overcome. We
have not the same political parties, nor
the same religious differences to contend with.
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